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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2016

TAGS: PREL PINS PBTS EAIR BG KU

SUBJECT: SECURITY ISSUES, BORDER INCIDENT HIGHLIGHT KUWAIT
DEFENSE MINISTER MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C/NF) The Ambassador met with Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of the Interior Shaykh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on August 22.

The Ambassador reiterated the U.S. offer of cooperation and support for moving the Gulf Security Dialogue forward and expressed the willingness of the USG to provide technical assistance with upgrading security systems for Kuwait's vital infrastructures, in particular maritime security systems. The DPM welcomed the offers of cooperation. The Ambassador also informed the DPM of the September 11-13 visit to Kuwait of security officials from United Airlines in preparation for the start of non-stop flights between Kuwait and the U.S. The Ambassador explained that, in order to comply with U.S. law, the airline would need to request additional security measures beyond those already in place at Kuwait City International Airport. The DPM assured the Ambassador that he would pursue the matter.

¶2. (S/NF) Shaykh Jaber informed the Ambassador of an incident along the Kuwait-Iraq border, reporting an attack on a Kuwaiti military patrol on the Kuwait side of the border. The DPM said it was an extended encounter involving exchanges of gunfire. At first the patrol thought the attackers were smugglers but that conclusion was ultimately rejected due to the extended nature of the encounter and the tactics used by the attackers. The DPM said that Iraqi government officials had been informed of the incident. (Note: A press report of the incident stated that the attack occurred on the evening of August 21 and that the GOK Ministry of Foreign Affairs would inform the United Nations of the incident. End Note.)

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LeBaron